

## National Records of Scotland (NRS) Postcode Based Geography Extract 2013/2 Release: Important information

**September 2013**

Dear Customer

Please find enclosed the latest version of our Postcode Index and digital postcode boundary dataset. The data is based on a July 2013 release of Royal Mail's Postal Address File (PAF).

The Postcode Index links current and terminated postcodes to administrative, health, statistical and other areas. It also contains the Gridlink®/NRS one metre grid reference as well as NRS assigned grid references.

This version contains:

- 184,207 live and deleted small user records;
- 48,601 live and deleted large user records of which 27,968 are Post Office Boxes and 1,454 unmapped postcodes.

The number of outstanding postcodes without a digital boundary is 177.

### **What's new in 2013\_2**

#### **1. New geographies – 2011 census output areas**

1.1 We have not been able to populate the 2011 census output areas within the time available to create the Extract, so that field remains blank. Instead we will publish a supplementary index with population and household counts which can be download from our website within the next few weeks.

#### **2. Boundary corrections**

2.1 Minor boundary amendments have been made to Community Health Partnership (CHP) and Local Administrative Unit (LAU) Level 2 to reflect past council area boundary changes.

#### **3. Other corrections**

3.1 We have removed census counts from the Large User (LU) table. The counts do not belong to the large user, but to the small user link postcode.

#### **4. Mismatch between the Postcode Index and postcode boundary datasets**

4.1 All 'live' postcodes listed in the Postcode Index have a corresponding postcode boundary in the postcode boundary dataset. When Royal Mail (RM) delete a postcode, the postcode is flagged as being 'deleted' in the Postcode Index and the boundary removed from the postcode boundary dataset. FK8 1QT was deleted by Royal Mail in July and flagged as such in the Postcode Index. On this occasion we have retained the boundary of FK8 1QT in the postcode boundary dataset purely for demonstration purposes. It will be removed for 2014\_1.

## 5. Improvements

- 5.1 We have published a Background Information paper on the Postcode Extract which explains our policies and practices in relation to postcodes as well as a number of other information papers and datasets; Civil Parish, Islands and Local Administrative Units Level 2 (LAU2). Please refer to the relevant geographies via the [Geography Products](#) page on the NRS website.
- 5.2 Unfortunately we have not had time to complete our planned 'How to' guide to help users extract specific data due to other priorities but our Geography Customer Services team will be on hand to provide help and advice. Please contact us if you require assistance. We hope to have this ready for 2014\_1.

## 6. Supply arrangements

- 6.1 Customers are reminded that they can download postcode data directly from the NRS website, both postcode boundaries and PC Index. This extract data will be available via the [NRS Postcode Extract](#) page of the NRS website. Customers wishing to continue receiving data on CD can do so if they prefer.

## 7. Application to Ordnance Survey (OS) for Derived Data Exemption (DDE) for NRS postcode boundaries

- 7.1 OS have rejected our DDE application for NRS postcode boundaries. We intend to appeal that decision. The dataset can continue to be used freely by all members of the One Scotland Mapping Agreement but non-members should contact our customer services team for advice.

## 8. 2011 Census

- 8.1 A range of 2011 Census geography products have been produced:

- 2011 Output Area (OA) to higher areas index and look ups, including 2011 postcode to 2011 Census output area.
- A file linking 1991OAs:2001OAs:2011OAs.
- 2011 OA boundaries.
- Boundaries for the census geographies.
- Metadata and supporting information.

- 8.2 These were published on 15 August but an anomaly was found in the 2011 output area code. The datasets have been temporarily removed but are due to be re-published week commencing 16 September. No shape boundaries, population or household estimates for OA changed as a result of this work, only the 9 character S-code they were assigned. This data will be available via the geography [Census datasets](#) page of the NRS website.

## 9. Planned changes to the Postcode Index

9.1 From 2014\_1 we are planning a number of changes to the Postcode Index. More details will be available on our website over the next few months but briefly we plan to:

- Include the current version of a Geography only e.g. CHP and CHP2011 will be dropped, only CHP2012 will be retained.
- Remove old geographies e.g. fieldnames: 1991 Local Government Districts, 1991 Local Government Regions etc but a postcode assignment to any geography removed will be available on request.
- Rename field names e.g. 'Council Area' becomes 'CouncilArea2011'. A file converting old label to new label will be available for download.
- Lookup files will limit information to name and code (a few exceptions apply) and the 9 character code applied in all cases where a 9 character code exists. A master set of lookups will be available to download containing old and new 9 character codes.
- Provide additional supporting information to help users understand postcodes and how to use the data.

9.2 Delivery of the planned changes is dependent on delivery of a new postcode management system, and it is possible that changes and improvements will slip into 2014\_2 Extract.

## 10. Copyright and reproduction

### 10.1 Licence

#### Postcode Boundaries and Index – Cut Version

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10.3 Further information of licensing can be found in the geography [licensing](#) page of the NRS website.

## 11. Enquiries

11.1 Please contact our Geography Customer Services team if you need any further information or queries.

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